

STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Division of Transportation Development
4201 East Arkansas Avenue, Shumate Bldg.
Denver, Colorado 80222
(303) 757-9769



NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

March 21, 2011

TO PERSONS INTERESTED IN TRANSIT SERVICES:

The purpose of this letter is to announce that the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is accepting applications for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5304 funds for 2011. This letter sets forth the purpose of the program, project and applicant eligibility, and guidelines for submitting an application.

Section 5304 funds can be used for a wide variety of transit planning activities, including: transit technical assistance, planning, research, demonstration projects, special studies, training and other similar projects. These funds are NOT available for capital or operating expenses of public transit systems. CDOT anticipates the availability of approximately \$305,619 in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011; however, please be advised that to date Congress has not yet passed a 2011 appropriation of the federal authorization contained within the SAFETEA-LU legislation.

FTA Section 5304 funds are made available in Colorado on an 80% federal/20% local matching ratio. CDOT is calling for proposals for projects that would be initiated in late 2011 or 2012. According to CDOT's Rules for this program, only **public bodies** are eligible applicants for Section 5304 funds; however, interested private nonprofit organizations may apply through a willing public body where the non-profit is a sub-recipient.

The Department's Rules and Regulations for implementation of the Section 5304 program contain the purpose, authority, procedures and threshold criteria for applicant eligibility, evaluation criteria, funding, and appeal procedures. The text of the Rules can be accessed at: www.dot.state.co.us/rules/ under "**2CCR 603-3**". If you would like a hard copy of the Rules, please send a mailing label and request to me at the address found on page three of this notice.

A separate FTA program, Section 5303, provides funding for transit planning in urbanized areas (population over 50,000). Since Section 5303 funding exceeds that of Section 5304 funding by a ratio of over four to one, the Department will generally not consider Section 5304 requests for planning projects in urbanized areas, or assign them a lower priority.

According to the Department's Rules, first priority is given to **statewide projects**, which includes grant administration; the provision of planning, technical and management assistance to transit operators; and, special planning or technical studies. Activities in this top priority category are often carried out by CDOT staff or contracted out. Organizations wishing to

suggest a statewide project or activity to be carried out by CDOT are encouraged to simply submit a brief descriptive letter to the Department, outlining the proposed project. The match for statewide projects is usually provided by the State. However, an applicant proposing to carry out a statewide project themselves would normally be expected to provide the 20% match.

The second priority is given to the **updating of existing regional transit plans (see below)**. Third priority is given to **requests for new regional transit plans**. Fourth priority is given to requests to conduct **local activities** such as: research, local transit operating plans, demonstration projects, training programs, strategic planning or site development planning. Fourth priority projects are usually in the \$10,000 to \$40,000 range. The fifth/last priority is funding studies in urbanized areas. Applicants from urbanized areas must either demonstrate that 5303 funds are otherwise committed or identify urbanized area funding to be used as part of the proposed study budget (in addition to any 5304 funds).

The regional planning process, utilized by CDOT for updating the fifteen Regional Transportation Plans around the state, is completed and the 2035 Plan has been adopted by the Transportation Commission. An organization planning to request funds for Section 5310, 5311, 5316, and 5317 funding must first have its proposed project described in, and consistent with, a locally adopted transit plan. Each Regional Transportation Plan and the Statewide Plan includes a transit component, thus the planning requirements are met by this current document. **Thus, the Division of Transit and Rail does not anticipate funding projects under categories two and three for 2011.**

The process for applying for Section 5304 funds is relatively simple and primarily involves the completion of a narrative in response to a short list of questions. Normally most applicants are able to do so successfully in two to three pages. What is most important is to fully explain the nature of the proposed project - its goals and objectives, purpose, beneficiaries, scope of work, and cost justification.

Applications for FY 2011 Section 5304 funds will be due at the Department of Transportation no later than **5:00 P.M. on Monday, May 9th, 2011**. There are two parts to the FTA Section 5304 application for funding: first, the online application that must be electronically submitted to CDOT by the due date; and second, the signature page that must be printed, signed, and post marked by the due date. Failure to submit both parts (online application and original signature page) of the FTA Section 5304 application by the due date will result in your project being excluded from funding consideration.

The online application and associated signature page is available at www.dot.state.co.us/App_Transit/

If your agency currently has a username and password issued by CDOT to access the Transit Program Website, please log into the system and fill out the 2010 FTA 5304 Application that is available under the Forms menu. The signature page can be downloaded from the link located at the bottom of the online application form. Do not fill out the application for funding without first logging on using your username and password.

If your agency does not have a CDOT issued username and password, please go to the web address above and access the application form by selecting the link on the homepage. This will take you directly to the 2011 FTA 5304 Application Form. The signature page can be downloaded from the link located at the bottom of the online application form.

Once your application has been submitted online you will receive an auto-generated confirmation of receipt. If you submitted an application, but failed to receive a confirmation, it will be your responsibility to follow-up before the deadline to ensure that your application is received for consideration. The original signature page must also be submitted to CDOT by the due date. However, because CDOT does not currently accept electronic signatures, the original signature page will need to be submitted via regular mail.

LATE APPLICATIONS and/or SIGNATURE PAGES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Please direct all questions to:

John Valerio
Colorado Department of Transportation
Transit Planner
4201 E Arkansas Ave., Shumate Building
Denver, Colorado 80222
303-757-9769
John.Valerio@dot.state.co.us

